

# What you need to know about flu vaccination if you have cancer

October 7 2022, by Laurel Kelly

---



Credit: Unsplash/CC0 Public Domain

As flu season approaches, it's important to understand the need to get vaccinated for influenza, or flu. Indications are it could be a different flu season than what the U.S. experienced the past two years. If you have

cancer, it's especially important that you protect yourself from the flu.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends a yearly flu vaccination for everyone six months and older, with rare exceptions. While it's not 100% effective, vaccination is your [best defense](#) against the flu.

Flu is a viral infection that attacks your respiratory system, including your nose, throat and lungs. At first, the flu may seem like a common cold with a runny nose, sneezing and sore throat. But colds usually develop slowly; whereas, the flu tends to come on suddenly. Although a cold can be a bother, you usually feel much worse with the flu.

For most people, the flu resolves on its own. But sometimes the flu and its complications can be deadly. People at higher risk of developing flu complications include [young children](#), [pregnant women](#) and those two weeks postpartum, people over 65, people with weakened immune systems and some [chronic illnesses](#), and people who are obese.

Having cancer, being treated for cancer or being a cancer survivor increase your risk for flu complications. For people at high risk, flu complications can include pneumonia, heart problems and acute respiratory distress syndrome. Pneumonia is one of the most serious complications as it can be deadly for older adults and people with a chronic illness.

Vaccination is your best defense against flu. If you haven't gotten your flu shot yet, now's the time.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

Citation: What you need to know about flu vaccination if you have cancer (2022, October 7)

retrieved 4 February 2023 from

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-10-flu-vaccination-cancer.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.